



Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy
Ranking Member, House Subcommittee Committee on Contracting and the Workforce
Opening Statement
Hearing on ED Programs
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The SBA administers a portfolio of Entrepreneurial Development programs, including Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, the Service Corps of Retired Executives or SCORE, and Veterans Business Outreach Programs. These initiatives provide aspiring entrepreneurs and existing businesses with invaluable counseling, training, technical assistance, and mentorship.

Whether it is help creating a business plan, navigating the procurement process, marketing a new product, or identifying international trade opportunities—the SBA's entrepreneurial development programs provide an array of services to help small firms navigate regulatory obstacles, grow, and thrive.

The agency's network of Small Business Development Centers—or SBDCs—is one such program. SBDCs operate in nearly 1,000 locations across the country and are located at

colleges, universities, Chambers of Commerce, and local economic development corporations, allowing them to harness local community resources.

In a single year, this initiative has helped more than 13,000 entrepreneurs launch new businesses, advised nearly 200,000 clients, provided training sessions for over 260,000 attendees, and helped clients obtain \$4.6 billion in financing. Clearly, SBDCs are a vital part of our nation's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The SBA has also undertaken efforts to connect younger entrepreneurs with more experienced businessmen and women through the SCORE program, an expansive network of entrepreneurs, business leaders, and executives who volunteer as mentors to small firms both in-person and online.

SCORE has grown to become one of the federal government's largest volunteer business advisor and mentoring programs, with over 11,000 business professionals at over 320 chapters nationwide. By offering advice from real world professionals, SCORE is helping many business owners within all categories of the entrepreneurial community.

Small businesses are as diverse as our nation and the SBA has entrepreneurial development initiatives targeted at specific demographic groups.

Women's Business Centers—or WBCs—are a critical initiative for female entrepreneurs. WBCs provide in-depth counseling, training, and mentoring to small firms, resulting in

substantial economic impact as measured by successful business start-ups, job creation and retention, and increased company revenues. Women business owners have used this program to develop business plans, obtain financing, and expand their operations. In Fiscal Year 2015, over 100 WBCs reached 130,000 clients and helped 700 new businesses get up and running.

Even though female entrepreneurship is on the rise, there remain significant gaps between men and women-owned businesses. As more women turn to entrepreneurship as a career path, it is critical this initiative remain in place to close these gaps.

Finally, there are a range of SBA programs targeted at our veterans, most notably the Veterans Business Outreach Centers, which serve over 60,000 clients each year. The VBOC program, along with Boots to Business and other veteran-oriented initiatives, ensure that our service members have the tools they need to go into business for themselves.

With respect to each of these programs, it is vital that taxpayer resources are being used wisely and to maximum effect. That is why this Committee has long pushed for clearer metrics and accountability, especially among the newer pilot programs at SBA.

However, the stated goal of eliminating duplication should not be used as an excuse to underinvest in entrepreneurial development. I was disappointed to see that the

Administration's recent budget blueprint calls for a 5 percent reduction for SBA. It is my hope that this Congress will provide robust funding for SBA ED programs that have a proven track record of helping small businesses create jobs and stimulate economic growth. **That is why Chairman Knight and I recently led a letter to the relevant appropriations subcommittee in support of these programs.**